

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A vehicle running board assembly comprising, in combination:
 - a structural frame having fore and aft edges and at least one connector adapted to connect the structural frame to a motor vehicle; and
 - a step pad comprising a step and fore and aft legs extending from the step past the corresponding fore and aft edges of the structural frame, wherein the step pad is secured to the structural frame.
2. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 wherein the step and the fore and aft legs of the step pad are formed of unitary construction.
3. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 further comprising reinforcing ribs formed on an underside of the step pad.
4. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 3 wherein the reinforcing ribs are on the fore and aft legs of the step pad.
5. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 further comprising an underside cover which cooperates with the step pad to enclose the structural frame.

6. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 wherein the structural frame has fore and aft flanges ending at the corresponding fore and aft edges, and the step pad further comprises walls formed on an underside of the step pad, forming a pocket which snugly receives fore and aft flanges of the structural frame.

7. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 comprising fore and aft walls formed on an underside of the step pad, which extend past the corresponding fore and aft edges of the structural frame.

8. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 comprising fore and aft walls formed on an underside of the step pad which at least partially wrap around the corresponding fore and aft edges of the structural frame.

9. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 1 wherein the step pad is formed by injection molding molten plastic around the structural frame.

10. A vehicle running board assembly comprising, in combination:
a structural frame having fore and aft edges and at least one connector adapted to connect the structural frame to a motor vehicle; and
a plastic step pad comprising a step and fore and aft legs extending from the step;
wherein the step pad is formed by injection molding molten plastic around the structural frame.

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2 11. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 10 wherein the structural
3 member is a metal and the step pad is a thermoplastic resin.

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5 12. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 10 wherein the step pad has at
6 least one side flange at least partially encapsulating a corresponding one of the at
7 least one connectors.

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9 13. A vehicle running board assembly comprising, in combination:
10 a structural frame having fore and aft legs and at least one connector adapted
11 to connect the structural frame to a motor vehicle; and
12 a step pad comprising a step and walls formed on an underside of the step
13 pad, forming a pocket which snugly receives fore and aft legs of the structural frame.

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15 14. The vehicle running board assembly of claim 13 wherein the step pad walls
16 comprise a pair of side walls and fore and aft walls, and an underside cover
17 cooperates with the step pad to at least partially enclose the structural frame.

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